1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961

EZ6 Malta EZ6

*132
102
654

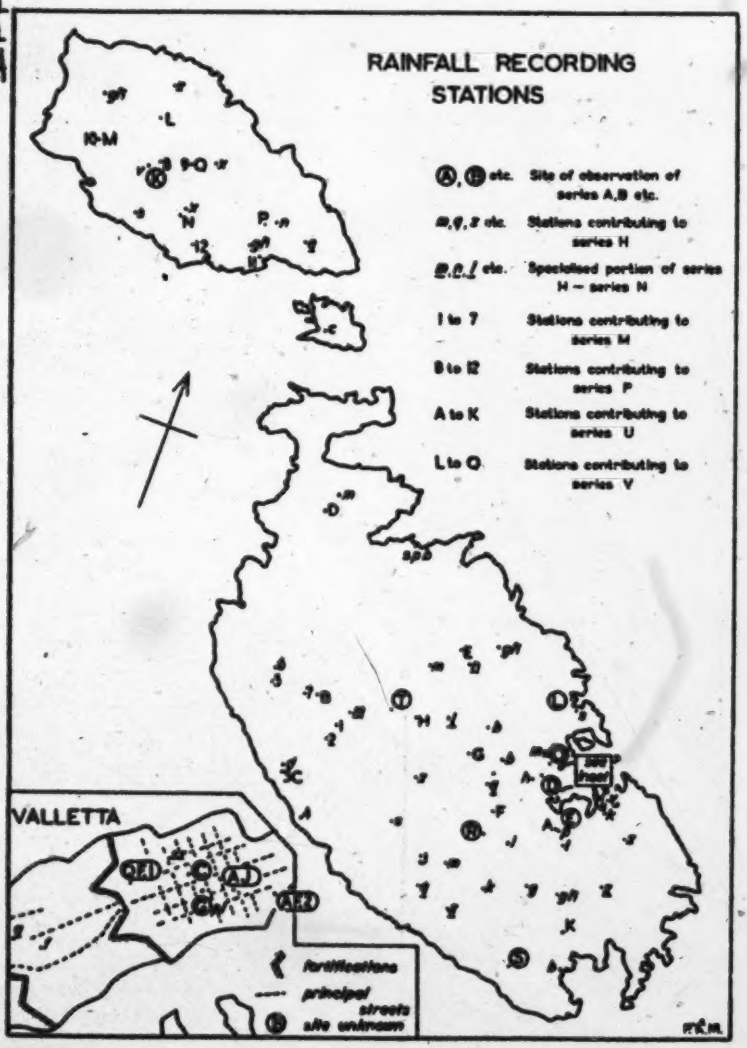

Fig. 9 Rainfall Recording Stations.

[p. 57-A]

*1327
(54

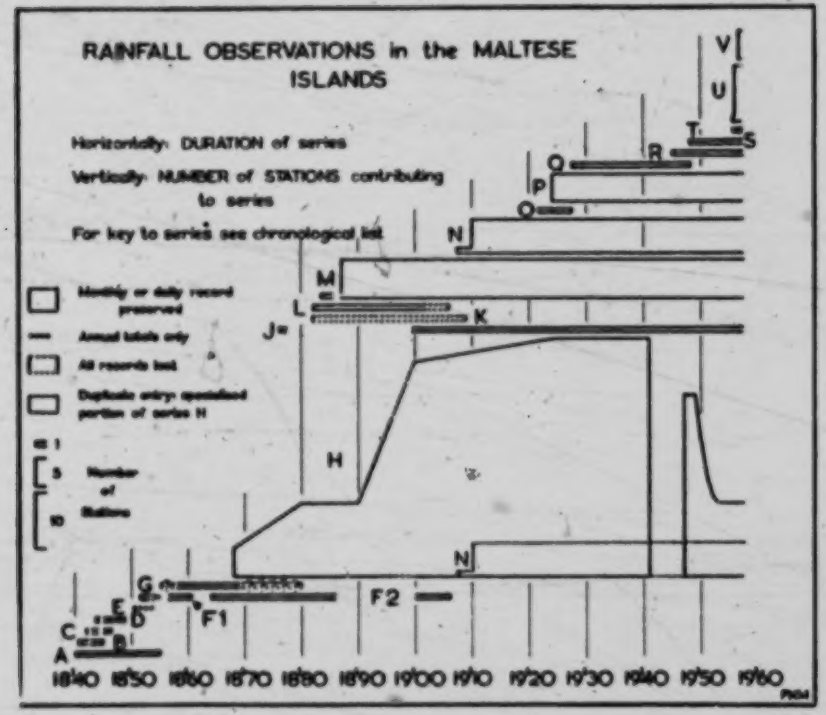

Fig. 10 Rainfall Observations in the Maltese Islands.

[p.57-8]

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961 EZ6 Malta EZ6

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

B. Economy and Trade

In any schematic division of history into periods there must be dangers and difficulties. Nevertheless, some themes of significance to our present study, naturally as well as for reasons of convenience, are best treated in this way. It is impossible to be precise about the date of birth of modern Malta in that different land marks might well be used in pursuing different lines of thought. Thus, constitutionally the year 1921 is of most significance, while the Royal Commission of 1911 is in some ways an economic obsequy for nineteenth-century Malta. In the sections that follow, therefore, arguments cannot be chronologically in step. Moreover, this, our last period, is the most well-documented of all and the irregularity of coverage most considerable. Some of the arguments earlier developed need little further emphasis in that some conditions and attitudes firmly established by the beginning of the twentieth century need merely to have their survival confirmed and readers referred to relevant material. Henceforward, therefore, our treatment can legitimately be more selective.

This period of Modern British Malta must be further subdivided. The first phase drew slowly and uneasily to a close during our period of research. It was formally ended by the suspension of the constitution in 1958. The new constitutional proposals of 1960 mark the official beginning of a second phase. The interregnum was the period of the transference of the Naval Dockyard to a civilian firm of ship repairers. In that we attach the greatest importance to the study of the fundamental infrastructure on which Maltese life has and will be based, most of the following analysis is concerned with the first phase - the climacteric of British rule in Malta. Our comment on more recent happenings is therefore deliberately restricted.

The Census of 1912 noted that in the decennial period 1901-11 ... 'productiveness has not risen in proportion to the increase of the population'.

The recorded Civil population in 1911 was 211,564. While in 1901, 28 per cent. of the female population was gainfully occupied, ten years later the proportion had fallen to 20 per cent. Henceforth male employment alone was of significance. The male labour force, which for analytical purposes was regarded as excluding only the age-group below five years of age, totalled 93,529. Of these almost 13,000 were engaged in agriculture, 19,489 in commerce and transport, and over 21,000 enumerated as having 'industrial' occupations. 31,385 were returned as unoccupied or unproductive.

The opening quotation is strictly an actuarial statement based on demographic facts. Behind the Census figures however we may perceive, by using various pieces of evidence, an economic basis for its sombreness. By comparing details of the 1911 enumeration with those for 1921, the first year in which unemployment within occupational groups was recorded, we may deduce that some 10 per cent. of the able male labour force was in fact without employment during the earlier year. By 1907, 10 per cent. of the ships cleared from Malta left in ballast (1). Between 1901 and 1911, the numbers of farmers and farmers' relatives assisting on the land increased by 3,000 and the number of labourers fell by 1,250 (2). Only once between 1906 and 1914, in 1908-09, did Government Revenue not show a deficit (3). In 1905, 9,175 men were employed in the Naval Establishments but this had fallen to 5,181 in 1906 (4). Many such facts could be quoted to prove the existence of an economic depression in Malta during the years following 1906, a situation which induced the setting up in 1911 of a Royal Commission to consider the financial situation. The array of evidence does more than this, it also shows that this was no simple secular trend but a sign of uneasy adjustment to new circumstances, an adjustment that is still in progress. This is why the Report of the 1911 Commission is of more than contemporary importance (5) and why its study is essential to any serious consideration of Maltese problems.

VINES

Viticulture, has suffered many vicissitudes. Needing irrigation water only for the raising of scions, the vine would seem a crop plant eminently suitable for all but the thinnest dry calcareous soils. No satisfactory reason has yet been adduced for the present absence of 'expertise' in this field, and this unsatisfactory state of affairs is a Mediterranean anachronism. Since Giacinto (3) wondered at Maltese oenological ignorance various improvements havetaken place. Stock is American in origin imported during the Phylloxera epidemic in Europe. Scions are officially imported for grafting and are mainly from France. On the whole, too little specialisation is found, grapes being grown both for table use, fetching prices about £4 per qantar (175 lb. ave.), and for pressing - controlled prices 46s. to 48s. per qantar depending on quality. Commercial success in any other than the home market will depend entirely on whether the viticulturalist can now be weaned from quantity production to quality production. Products at present, while being remarkably good value, are not suitable for profitable export.

In Malta (Fig. 81), there is a striking concentration of viticulture in the western half of the island. In contrast to general Mediterranean practice, vines occupy much of the best watered heavy land of the Blue Clay slopes. Secondly, vines are of importance in the larger depressions with plentiful sub-soil water, for example the Wied il-Ghasel, the Bingemma Basin, and Mifieb. Those cultivated areas of the north and west which rely on pump irrigation - such as the Wied tal-Pwales, and the Rabat-Dingli upland pockets - have little land under vines. Over the remainder of the island, vines are mainly represented by wall- and house-side plants which, mainly for domestic use, are becoming of less importance as field cultivation is extended. This extension of acreage is taking place almost entirely in the traditional regions of the west.

As shown in Fig. 82, viticulture in Gozo, occurs in a great variety of conditions and there is a much greater extent of inter-cultivation with other tree-crops. Such inter-cultivation is particularly found in the *gnien* zones - the spring line belts lying below the Upper Coralline mesa cappings - as around Żebbuġ and Nadur. North of Nadur, it extends into the Wieds San Blas and Dahlet Qorrot. Except in the remote western lands and on the thin soils of the southern hills, vines are found everywhere; in the central mixed-soil lowlands, in the open northern valleys and on the eastern coastal slopes. This reflects the traditional self-sufficiency of the Gozitan farm economy, a point also brought out by the large number of vineries (see p. 213). The vine is also inter-cultivated with sulla which, undersown annually, is a useful soil-renewing and cleaning crop.

OLIVES

Inset maps, Figs. 81 and 82. Malta must be the only Mediterranean land where the tradition of olive cultivation has almost disappeared. Vegetable oil consumption is high and has to be supplied by imports costing on average nearly £300,000 per annum. Olive cultivation has been more extensive in the past as attested by place names such as Żebbuġ - the place of the olive, and Żejtun - olive tree, and is still perfectly feasible over a great deal of under-utilised land. Various reasons for this strange situation have been mooted, ranging from the completely invalid belief that the olive cannot stand sea-air to the inadequate charge that tenurial security is insufficiently great. The matter is still a mystery.

Recent extensions of planting, particularly at Salinas and on Bajda Ridge, have been Government-sponsored, and the latter case is basically a scheme for the afforestation of a water catchment and percolation area.

CITRUS FRUITS

Because of their large water requirements, oranges and lemons are of orchard importance only along the Upper Coralline - Blue Clay springlines in Western Malta and Eastern Gozo. Scattered trees and very small plots are found in many districts, often in the most unlikely places. The Seville orange, once of considerable importance, is now rarely found and most of the old trees have

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 217]

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

Table 41. Estimated percentages of total agricultural land owned by various groups. c. 1950. 423*

	Civil Govt.	War Depts.	Church, etc.	Landlord	Farmer's Family	Farmer	Total
Malta	16	1	22	51	2	8	100
Gozo	23		12	54	2	9	100
Both Islands	19		19	52	2	8	100

be properly worked. This argument as a basis for encouraging owner-occupance must be treated with some suspicion. All the field evidence goes to show that, in recent years, land purchases by working farmers have been mainly of good and, if possible, irrigated land. The Maltese agriculturalist rarely makes a conscious assessment of his returns in terms of productivity of labour or capital but rather the emphasis is placed on gross production. Nevertheless, general productivity, security of harvest and even social status all make him buy the best land, even at inflated prices. Little of such freehold property is difficult to work and little of it therefore lies 'waste'.

Historically there is further proof that the incentive of ownership is on its own of no great importance in increasing the proportion of worked land in any holding. Early nineteenth century writers both commented on the large areas of rock and other wasteland in the North of Malta, and on the age-old practice of building 'artificial fields' (see p. 324). There was a widespread belief that the whole of the cultivated land had been created in this way and that further extension was mainly a matter of encouraging the farmers to undertake the labour involved. A Commission of the *Società Economico Agraria* considered the question and made in their report of 1848 (3) the following points. First, any increase in agricultural production, particularly of grains, would be welcome. Secondly, there existed a pool of grossly under-employed labour and capital. Thirdly, although the physical extension of the cultivated area would be a slow process, the national advantage would be great. Fourthly, this end could be achieved by the granting of land in perpetual emphyteusis so that capital and labour could be securely applied to reclamation. In 1858 Schembri supported such a policy (4).

423* 311 654

From 1850 onwards, much barren Crown land was distributed on this basis, frequently in parcels of 16 *imicn* and on 99-year emphyteutical leases. Subject to improvement (a clause that does not appear to have been enforced), the tenant had complete security of a tenure which could be renewed by his heirs on a preferential basis at low rents. During the first period rents could be as low as 1½d. per *tomna*.

Although some land was improved, the project as a whole was not a great success. Economic and social changes can be held responsible for some of the lack of response to these offers, for the second half of the nineteenth century was a dynamic period. In spite of much Crown expenditure on the laying out and construction of access roads, and the building of many field and terrace walls, some land was never taken up and more remained economically marginal. Of the leased land, a considerable proportion was later abandoned.

The main factor making for local success or failure of the scheme was the availability or otherwise of water. Two contrasting examples illustrate this point. Fig. 137 shows an area of 16 *imien* in the hands of one tenant. Small patches of vetch are the sole evidence of use. Figs and vines planted during early development no longer bear fruit. This long-lease land is virtually waste. The other example, illustrated in Fig. 138, has similar terrain and is more exposed to wind and seaspray. Here the presence of a shallow water-body has provided an incentive for the slow development of a soil cover and enabled intensive cultivation to succeed. Twenty-two heirs of the original lessee have each insisted on their right to work a portion of the holding.

423* 102 311 654

*423 654 These are extreme cases but everywhere it is true that during the last century, continuity of tenure has not been enough in itself to produce land improvement.

*423 427 A variety of forms of tenure exists in the Islands. Emphyteutical leases, which must be documented, are legally all such that extend for a term longer than 16 years and have the proper content and conditions. On Crown land a period of 99 years has been favoured, but leases of 30 and 60 years are also found. The essence of such leases lies in their emphasis on tenant improvement of the land and on compensation for premature dispossession. Some of the implications of the official encouragement of emphyteusis have already been examined. In general the system is based on the supposition that the lease is long enough to reward the tenant for his development work, and that the land has been improved to a level at which short-term leases - first offered to the emphyteuta's heirs - become feasible.

Other leases are generally based on a four-year rotational cycle, in its turn based on the duration of the effects of intensive manuring on 'dry' land. Entry is normally on 15th August, in the 'dead' period of the year, and the most popular lease is for a duration of eight years with an option for renewal for a further similar term. On expiration the land is usually held on a yearly basis until a new satisfactory settlement is reached. Provisions for repairs usually divide responsibility between tenant and landlord on the basis of the scale of work and capital needed, the tenant being always responsible for wells and cisterns. Water derived from the holding should only be used thereon but in practice this is ignored. Regulation of husbandry is rarely mentioned except in general terms. Unless specifically revoked, legal provision exists for the remission of rents in the event of naturally caused crop-failure, although we have no knowledge of such a claim being made in recent years. After the flood damage of the autumn of 1957, the appeals were solely for Governmental aid.

The problem of compensation for improvement or for dispossession has in Malta as in other countries given rise to much disputation. Unless agreed by the landlord, any improvements to short-leased land can only be indirectly recovered either by removing impermanent fixtures or by the incoming tenant paying for items such as recent manuring or tillage. In the latter case, both parties regard the transaction in the light of a hand-over charge rather than as formal compensation.

Before 1940, the short-lease tenant had little legal security of continuity of tenure. On the termination of a lease the sitting tenant had preferential rights to renewal only if he were prepared to accept conditions equally or more onerous than would other applicants, provided the courts held these conditions to be reasonable. Such preference was negated if the land was needed by an owner or cousin or nearer relation of the owner. Theoretically, therefore, the ability of the tenant-farmer to resist rent increases or to prevent loss of investment was very limited. Wartime Emergency Regulations resulted in the creation of a special Board to consider problems of tenure where leases were shorter than for 16 years. Since that time preferential rights of renewal have been extended to cover immediate relations of a deceased tenant or to the equivalent of 'copyholders'. Rent increases must not be based on any increase in value accruing from any type of improvement, and their reasonableness is adjudged by comparable neighbouring rents. Greater freedom was afforded in sub-letting has now to be justified on the basis of a minimum four year use.

*423 311 427 The combination of short leases and absence of compensation for improvement has been held at one time or another to be responsible for virtually all the ills and defects of Maltese farming from a reluctance to plant tree-crops to the poorness of many local track and access roads. As with the relationship between freehold tenure and intensity of land use, such arguments are not fundamentally valid. Where physical economic conditions provide incentive to investment and improvement then the cultivator generally responds, no matter

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

question unless a complete agricultural revolution committed Maltese farming to thorough-going dairy farming specialisation. Such specialisation, given the climatic and physiological difficulties, would not be easy to justify. A very considerable seasonal glut of milk exists between May and August at present, and the Milk Marketing Undertaking cannot handle the flush. This degree of fluctuation could be lessened but not removed. Costs of production are such that not only would exports be uneconomic but imported tinned milk can and could considerably undercut home production. Local consumption of fresh cows' milk could not be expanded much more than 10 to 15 per cent. above the present level which is already the highest in the Mediterranean, as long as tinned milk is more easily preserved, and as long as the rural community keeps goats and sheep. The banning of milk imports and of the production of goat milk would hardly be in the consumer's economic or dietetic interests.

Horses, mules and donkeys, some 6,500 in number, are still very important as work animals. For farm transport, they can only be replaced by the internal combustion engine purchasable only by the more prosperous cultivators. Produce collection by merchants' lorries is increasing as also is the use of hired tractors for cultivation. The numbers of these animals is unlikely to decrease quickly outside the urban areas because of their usefulness in tilling difficult land.

Of the remaining small livestock, rabbits and poultry already make a very large although immeasurable contribution to food supplies. Improvements in quality could be obtained if farmers' interest was aroused. At present, mixed breeds of poor poultry are commercially uneconomic.

In conclusion, we must return to the vexed question of dairy-farming and milk production in Malta. In 1950, the Director of Agriculture (1) put the question: 'Under prevailing conditions in Malta and Gozo, which is the more profitable animal to keep? The cow or the goat?', and followed with the statement: '... no accurate answer backed by accurate scientific data has ever been given'. The same impasse had often been noted before, for example by Dawson Shepherd (2), and Stockdale (3). An unpublished report on Maltese Agriculture by a visiting F.A.O. commission (4) similarly found itself at sea in the absence of any firm information. In 1956, the complexity as well as the obscurity of the situation was manifested in a Report on the Dairy Industry by G. W. Ford (5). In this study, reference is made to the different conclusions reached by independent observers, and to intermediate suggestions made by Marshall (6), one of whose remarks: 'I simply cannot visualise hygienic milk production by the peasant farmer in Malta', our observations would endorse.

Milk-production in Malta is no longer a matter of economics but, as in many countries, is affected by social and dietetic policies. Brief mention was made in Chapter VI C of the problem of the incidence of undulant fever and its association with milk infected by *Brucellosis Melitensis*. Some 20 per cent. of Maltese goats are thus infected, and any dietetic campaign to encourage the drinking of milk, particularly important in child welfare, must take account of this. Few cows are thus far infected and elimination is easier. The problem that emerges is therefore both economic and social in character. It is felt by some that reliance on imported tinned milk is one solution but by others such a suggestion is regarded as humiliating. Another possible line of action is to replace goats with milch cows, and in 1956 a system by which herdsmen were offered one Dutch Friesian heifer in calf for 12 diseased goats actually came into operation. The third possibility is to accept the position as it exists at the moment, or slightly to modify it, and centralise milk distribution thus enabling pasteurisation. This too has been done. Even now however, the cost of tinned milk imports, the cost of producing cows' milk, the surplus of goats' milk, all these as well as the land use point mentioned earlier, still remain to be dealt with. As we shall see, the market for milk called into being as a social measure is now the mainstay of many farmers of all grades. The development of the centralised agency, the Milk Marketing Undertaking has been accompanied by a guaranteed price system. Some 50 per cent. of all milk producers have, as a result of this organising of wholesale purchases, formed their own union the K.M.H. - *Kumpanija Maltija*

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

Ial-Halib'. These bodies have introduced some constant elements into an otherwise chaotic situation but this has also implied a certain rigidity. Sonce the costs of milk production are not accurately known and the costs to the National Economy are ignored one now has an artificial market with artificial prices which must be maintained to prevent economic disaster on the farms. (For such information on production and marketing as is available, the reader is further referred to Chapters X D and X E.)

LIVESTOCK REFERENCES

1. Memorandum by the Director of Agriculture to Sir George Schuster, Malta. April 1950. Unpublished.
2. DAWSON SHEPHERD, J.: A Report on Agriculture in Malta, Malta 1920.
3. STOCKDALE, F. A.: The Present Condition of Maltese Agriculture.1934. Malta G.P.O.
4. F.A.O. Report on the Development of Agricultural Resources in Malta. Rome 1955. Restricted.
5. FORD, G. W.: The Dairy Industry in the Maltese Islands 1936. A Report. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. U.K. Unpublished.
6. MARSHALL, S. S.: Report to Colonial Office. U.K. 1936. Unpublished.

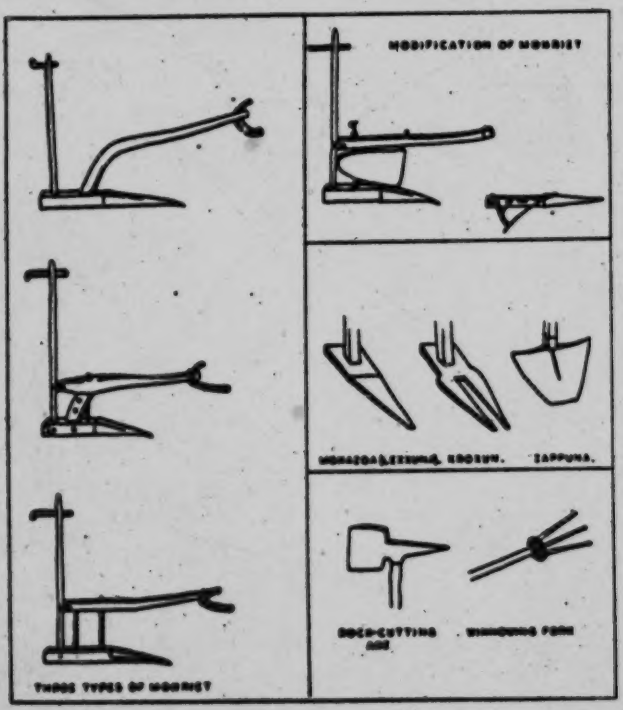

Fig. 148 Cultivation Equipment.

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

weed greens pulled from wallsides and fallow or abandoned fields. Sulla, green barley and the minor legumes make up the remainder of the bulk feed, except for prickly pear which is used as a summer reserve fodder. Concentrates in the form of cake and beans are invariably fed to cattle but cake is rarely given to goats. There is considerable variation in the feeding of calves and kids. The most characteristic feature of livestock feeding is, however, the complete lack of uniformity and the virtual absence of any rational programme of feeding of cattle. At a relatively low level, most Maltese farmers are better acquainted with goats' needs and of course those needs are fairly elastic. With cattle, as the survey showed, every possible range and combination of diet is to be observed. 'Farmers seem to have little idea about the relative nutritive values of foodstuffs such as cake and beans' (16), so that over-feeding and unbalanced feeding are normal. An extreme example is that of a goatherd, newly possessed of a Friesian heifer in calf, through a Government exchange scheme (p. 310), who stall-fed it 15 lb. of cake, 3.5 lb. of beans, one bundle of green sulla and half a sack of barley straw daily. At the same time there exists a 'pedigree complex' and the possession of an animal with a known lineage and some Friesian blood is a matter of pride.

Animal diseases are prevalent, ranging from endemic infection by *brucellosis melitensis* and pregnancy diseases in goats to contagious abortion and mastitis in cattle. Most of these result from unhygienic and inadequate accommodation. The Maltese livestock farmer, as noted later, operates on a small scale and with little capital. The provision of adequate facilities can only be done with borrowed money. Since 1956, Governmental loans and subsidies have been available for helping with the construction of stock houses, water supply systems etc., as well as for purchases of machinery. Instruction in animal care and hygiene is also provided. Mental resistance to change is not as great in this sector as in crop-production because losses through disease are more catastrophic in their impact on individual farmers. Nevertheless, even here, the better the traditional practices, the more loth cultivators may be to accept advice. Thus in a case-study of a very efficient fraternal partnership holding some 70 *imien* and practising mixed farming, a standard reaction was found. This partnership had no shortage of capital, and the production of an average of 50 gallons a day from 20 milch cows is high for Malta. Unfortunately, with livestock as with crops, the high degree of success attributable to their able application of traditional ideas seems to bar the way to future progress - 'A good cowman knows as much as a vet.'. At the other extreme lie the perpetually indebted small producers with insufficient land, money or even traditional expertise, for whom advice must be simple and fundamental. Here again, the Agricultural Advisory Service can only produce slow improvements.

With livestock, as with husbandry, the need for improving standards is obvious. The maximum efficiency in the utilisation of all possible resources is essential to Malta. Work is in hand, limited unfortunately by the perpetual shortage of revenue and trained personnel (a situation which is the result of Malta's peculiar evolution), in a variety of ways, from studies of balanced rations for livestock and improved crop strains even to a pilot survey of the seaweed resources of the island (17). But, before any recommendations can be implemented, they must be accepted by the farmers of Malta and Gozo.

REFERENCES

1. GILL, L. S.: Broomrapes, Dodders and Mistletoes: Plant Diseases. p. 77. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. 1953.
2. HOPKINS, J. F. C.: Report on Plant Protection Needs in Malta. Malta G.P.O., 1956.
3. WHEELER, B. E. J.: A Plant Disease Survey of Malta, January-June 1957. Interim Report. Unpublished.
4. MITCHELL, P. K.: A Memorandum on Forecasting Potato Blight in Malta. Durham. 1957. Unpublished.
5. HOPKINS, J. F. C.: op. cit.
6. LAMO, D. M.: Soils of Malta and Gozo. H.M.S.O. 1959. Soils Map D.O.S. (Misc. 338) 1960, and see Chapter III A.

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

178 but there has been a delegation of his traditional secondary functions. The spread of Government primary education, for example, has produced a literate younger generation able to write - and think - for itself; rediffusion, cinemas, and television have made their presence felt; the Maltese-language press has grown in volume and scope; letters and visits from emigrated Maltese widen horizons rapidly; cheap bus transport puts most of the Malta within easy reach; health and social services have brought improvements; C.A.R.E. (2) and other relief supplies have brought a new external influence; the changing pattern of work with the new limited working day is giving the time for the novel activities made possible by cultural and material advancement. The last 50 years have seen the appearance and spread of the lay religious movements (see Chapter VI C) which have attempted to relieve the Priest of some of the work with which he had previously been able to contend unaided. The Society of Christian Doctrine [575] (M.U.S.E.U.M.), founded in 1909, was the first of these but larger and more comprehensive is Catholic Action whose four groups for men, women, young men, and young women have been established throughout the Islands to provide the modern Maltese parallel to the Village Institute, Youth Club and Church Fellowship of other countries.

The rural family was traditionally the economic unit within the village. A century ago, farming in Malta implied the self-sufficiency of the true subsistence peasant rather than the crop- and milk-selling producer of today. The food for the family came very largely from the fields worked by its members, milk from their own goats or sheep and clothing from home-produced cotton and wool.

Money and matters financial now occupy a major part of the thoughts of the Maltese farmer - even of the older generation, illiterate and cut off from more cultural developments. Barter as a means of exchange is breathing its last. Perhaps more than anything else did the 1939-45 war mark the change. During the years of siege and shortage the farmer was able to get prices for produce out of all proportion to anything before or since. With the return of conditions to normal after the war this Golden Age of Maltese farming collapsed but the farmer went on somehow expecting to make the same profits in peace as he had in war. The fact that he has not been able to do this, even with recent Government protective farming programmes of subsidies, guaranteed prices and other artificial inducements, has increased the bitterness which the farmer has come to feel for his lot. For its part, the Government has tried to keep the farming community as contented as possible and at the same time has embarked on attempts at dairy and general farming reforms of methods, varieties, marketing, etc., in an attempt to stop the retreat from the land and from the way of life based on it. The produce of the soil is, after all, Malta's only major locally-based industry. This has seemed to prove to the farmer that *'Gvern'* ought to do all that it has done for the farmer, and a lot more. The Government's recent policy has been to educate the farmer to accept the new ideas and novel methods and techniques and it has attempted to do this through lectures to farmers, programmes on rediffusion, and pamphlets - along with the inducements of subsidies and guarantees. But the limited success of this programme has emphasised the basic problem in farming today which is that the 'Farmer' is now the middle-aged or old man, whose lack of education and experience outside the community of his village makes it most unlikely that he will accept information and advice from those who are patently not *Maltese* farmers and lack the lifetime's association with the alleged idiosyncracies of the Maltese environment.

The younger generation, which has benefited from a thorough primary schooling, might have been the individuals to listen to lectures on farming but, and here is the basic problem, as a group the sons and daughters of farmers are desperate to leave the land and even more concerned to rid themselves of what they see as the social inferiority attached to the calling of their fathers. These young people have in fact been educated to an awareness of new possibilities of economic and social life outside farming and also outside the village community which bred them. So many of the younger generation have in fact managed to make the break with the way of life of their fathers that the average age of the Maltese farmer is now higher than only a few years ago, and is still rising (see Section III Introduction).

241 423 rapidly than does the full-time farmer who often seems to continue working unpracticable fields, which, by present standards, are uneconomic. He continues to work them for reasons which are a mixture of sentimental attachment, force of habit and, quite often, stark ignorance of the fact that the plots concerned are bringing him loss rather than profit. He does not indulge in cost-accounting.

241 464 433 This is the background to the present attempts to rescue Maltese farming from its two main difficulties:

(a) a drastic reduction in the agricultural labour force due to the retreat from the land, especially by the younger generation,

[654] (b) the fact that contemporary Maltese farming cannot produce a profit without subsidies and protection from foreign competition.

654 241 464 The answer to the labour problem is held to be mechanization, along with the education of the farmer in the use of better suited methods, crops, animals, etc., and maximum development of the land by means of low-interest Government loans to farmers. The accepted answer to (b) is in fact not an answer at all but entails the creation of an artificial farming economy in which Government subsidies and guaranteed markets enable the farmer to make some profit where he would otherwise sustain a heavy loss. The cost of this is the price which the Government is willing to pay in order to develop the Islands' only primary industry to the maximum and to encourage the farming community to remain on their farms.

The limited scope of these solutions emerges from the discussions of labour, mechanization and protective subsidies and guarantees which follow.

LABOUR

178 462 [592] The decline of the peasant system in Malta and its replacement by what has been called commercial farming has been accompanied by changes in the family as the operating group within the farm. There has been no strictly formal division of labour by sex in Malta[20] but there is an 'accepted' division and this is important to an understanding of the present socio-economic upheaval in Maltese rural society.

562 462 178 In traditional and peasant Malta woman's place was certainly in the home. An old adage held that "Women should never appear but twice in public: the day they are married and when they are buried" (R/326, Vol. 1, p.80). Even today the countrywoman, especially in Gozo, still divides her activity between home, Church, and the fields worked by the

241 Direct hiring of implements from a contractor as against 30.
474 exchange of labour between farmers is becoming increasingly common, while a recent development has been the tractor co-operative in which a number of farmers share a cultivator or tractor which they own in common.

MECHANIZATION

178 The first large tractors made their appearance in Malta
407 in the 1930s (Case XV, XXII) but "at that time there was a general feeling against the use of such machines on the land and it was about five years before their value was acknow-
[427] ledged and suspicions overcome"[12]. One of the earliest tractor-hire businesses (Case XV) began in 1935 and for a
[422] decade there were comparatively few competitors. Since the 1939-45 War however, the number of farmers and others owning agricultural tractos and mechanized implements[24] has increased to about thirty in Malta[25] and some twelve in Gozo (1957). A sample survey of these tractor operators[26], made in 1957, revealed that the number of such machines is still increasing but the work available for them is decreasing. This is clear from a consideration of the points raised in Cases XV to XII (Section 6, Part 2).

The main points emerging were

(a) There are too many large tractors for the work available. In some cases, Government control was recommended (Case XVI), while in Gozo it appeared the contractors had themselves limited their own spheres of operation by agreement (Case XXII).

(b) The great increase in the number of hand-operated rotary cultivators was fast putting the large tractors out of business for two reasons

(i) the machines are small, more manoeuvrable in tiny fields and can be used during the greater part of the year - even in wet weather,

(ii) costing only some few hundred pounds they can
[654] be bought by large numbers of individual farmers - especially since low-interest loans are now available from the Government.

(c) The limited area of land suitable for working with a deep-plow in the Islands. Many fields are too small or too inaccessible for such big machinery - though they can comfortably accommodate the small rotary cultivators.

(d) The exclusion of tracked vehicles from public highways (unless 'shod' or moved by lorry) irritates the contractors who frequently have to travel long distances between asignments (Case - XVII).

407 474 with the setting up of co-operatives which would make available to the farmer the services of a heavy tractor and deep-plow on hire as required and would enable the very small-scale farmer and the part-timer to hire the smaller type of cultivating machine at low cost in cases where he does not wish or cannot afford to purchase his own cultivator.

SUBSIDY and GUARANTEE

435 241 654 During the 1939-45 War the Maltese Government offered farmers in the Islands very high guaranteed prices for produce handed in to the collection centres in each district. Farmers enjoyed for a brief period prosperity they had never known before and were able to build up often considerable financial reserves (Cases VI, XII).

434 435 241 654 Following this precedent the farmer today, under quite different conditions of competition from abroad, demands a guaranteed income for the work he expends on crop and milk production. He insists that responsibility for this subsidy and guarantee falls, as in war-time siege years, on "Il-Gvern", the Government. He overlooks the fact that his produce cannot in many cases hope to compete with foreign goods on price. He is in fact not concerned as to who buys his produce so long as "Il-Gvern" organizes its export and marketing and gives him a substantial return.

654 The Government, for its part, realizes the difficulties which the farmer in Malta and Gozo has to face and is thus confronted with a choice of policy. Should it favour the consuming Maltese public by giving them the cheapest possible foodstuffs (which would often mean imported goods rather than Maltese home produce) or should it protect the farmer by subsidizing his profit and guaranteeing his sales - at least in part? Official policy has of recent years tended to do both these things. The ration of basic commodities (bread, sugar, farinaceous paste, and butter) allows everyone in the Islands to obtain a part of the food they consume at low, subsidized prices, over and above which they are at liberty to buy on the open market.

The aid-to-farming programme is still more recent and is by no means yet old enough for all its ramifications and possibilities to be clear. So far it has included four main types of help to agriculture.

234 654 (a) First there is the guaranteed price to herdsmen for milk (of adequate fat content) supplied to the M.M.U. This varies slightly with season and there is a difference of a few pence between cows' and goats' milk. The average of some 5/- or 6/- per gallon to the producer amounts to some 8d per pint produced. Now the M.M.U. sells

407 474 with the setting up of co-operatives which would make available to the farmer the services of a heavy tractor and deep-plow on hire as required and would enable the very small-scale farmer and the part-timer to hire the smaller type of cultivating machine at low cost in cases where he does not wish or cannot afford to purchase his own cultivator.

SUBSIDY and GUARANTEE

435 241 654 During the 1939-45 War the Maltese Government offered farmers in the Islands very high guaranteed prices for produce handed in to the collection centres in each district. Farmers enjoyed for a brief period prosperity they had never known before and were able to build up often considerable financial reserves (Cases VI, XII).

434 435 241 654 Following this precedent the farmer today, under quite different conditions of competition from abroad, demands a guaranteed income for the work he expends on crop and milk production. He insists that responsibility for this subsidy and guarantee falls, as in war-time siege years, on "Il-Gvern", the Government. He overlooks the fact that his produce cannot in many cases hope to compete with foreign goods on price. He is in fact not concerned as to who buys his produce so long as "Il-Gvern" organizes its export and marketing and gives him a substantial return.

● 654 The Government, for its part, realizes the difficulties which the farmer in Malta and Gozo has to face and is thus confronted with a choice of policy. Should it favour the consuming Maltese public by giving them the cheapest possible foodstuffs (which would often mean imported goods rather than Maltese home produce) or should it protect the farmer by subsidizing his profit and guaranteeing his sales - at least in part? Official policy has of recent years tended to do both these things. The ration of basic commodities (bread, sugar, farinaceous paste, and butter) allows everyone in the Islands to obtain a part of the food they consume at low, subsidized prices, over and above which they are at liberty to buy on the open market.

The aid-to-farming programme is still more recent and is by no means yet old enough for all its ramifications and possibilities to be clear. So far it has included four main types of help to agriculture.

234 654 (a) First there is the guaranteed price to herdsmen for milk (of adequate fat content) supplied to the M.M.U. This varies slightly with season and there is a difference of a few pence between cows' and goats' milk. The average of some 5/- or 6/- per gallon to the producer amounts to some 8d per pint produced. Now the M.M.U. sells

6:Beeley K-5 (1957-1958) 1959 EZ6 Malta EZ6

234 654 pasteurized milk at about this same price to the general public, regardless of the administrative, collection and pasteurization costs involved and the losses on surplus milk wasted. The subsequent deficit is born by the Government exchequer and may therefore be regarded as a Government subsidy to the milk producer. Its effect in the past few years has been immense in that it has encouraged herdsmen all over the Islands to increase their production to the maximum at the expense of arable cash-crops (Cases I to IX).

232 654 (b) As part of the general policy to improve farming in the Islands and, at the same time, to eradicate certain livestock diseases the Government has made available to herdsmen an exchange scheme whereby they may exchange diseased animals for newly imported stock. This has also included goats, some dozen of which could be exchanged for a cow. Along with this stock improvement policy has gone official limitation on the number of animals entering the Islands since the present overstocking is regarded as undesirable. Farmers have however not been slow to find ways round such limitations - one popular method of acquiring a cow having been, for example, for a farmer to buy in weak and ailing goats and effect an exchange of these for a healthy imported heifer.

654 (c) Of considerable help to the arable farmer as well as the herdsman has been the programme of 'Loans and Grants' ('Self u Donazzjonijiet') by the Government to farmers for the purpose of making capital improvements in the farm and its operation. The low-interest loans have been particularly popular and have already enabled many farmers to buy, for example, their own rotary cultivators (Case II). One important limiting feature in these loans has been the ignorance on the part of many farmers of the system and the suspicion felt by others of something new and not clearly explained.

(d) Of particular concern to the arable farmer have been the various distributions of free or subsidized seeds, potatoes, tomatoes, etc. In some cases the aim has here been to popularize some new departure from custom such as a variety of early potato new to Malta or to introduce farmers to the 'Balanced Ration' ('Ghalf Bilanċjat') experiments of the agricultural authorities.

242 657 (e) In this same category of aids to farming comes the recently-formed Agricultural Advisory Service, which has itself been responsible for many of the new moves mentioned and also for the series of public lectures to farmers (Section 4), which have been part of the effort to improve farming in the Islands by providing an up-to-date research

242 654 and information centre to which the farmer may turn for advice and material help. Much discussed by the farming community in 1958 were the plans for a proposed artificial insemination centre to help in the improvement of stock in the Islands along with the provision of an efficient stud (Section 4). The early stages of the Advisory Service are outlined in B/252.

178 241 654 181 [234] Thus a lot has been done and a great deal more said about farming in Malta and its improvement and modification to bring it more closely into line with present conditions both in Malta and abroad. The farmer's characteristic conservatism has to be overcome at every stage (v. Section 4) but where he sees a clear prospect of quick profit he is not slow to move. The outstanding example of this is the guaranteed milk sale through the M.M.U. which, in the space of a few years, has produced a revolution in dairying in the Islands.

433 654 234 The herdsman is not concerned with an increasing milk surplus in the Islands as a whole. While the guarantee remains he will continue to put every effort into selling more gallons each day and to subordinating cash-cropping to fodder production in his fields (Cases I to IX). It is certainly keeping him in farming but it is not, apparently, having the same effect on his son.

SECTION 3 : The Farmer and Living Standards

MONEY

433 434 178 [175] In the early nineteenth century the Maltese farmer was a 'peasant' in the sense that he was engaged in small scale subsistence farming with the help only of his family. Economically and socially he saw little beyond his family, farm and village. There were very few wants which could not be supplied at home, or at least within the village. In 1958 one heard of a now almost mythical Maltese countryman of a hundred years previously whose annual expenses in terms of money totalled 6d : 3d for paraffin and 3d to have his horse shod! Today, the farmer who spoke thus of his predecessor receives about £300 for the milk which he sells each year (Case I) as but one item in a present annual turnover of several hundred pounds which characterizes modern 'commercialized' agriculture in Malta where the farmer produces for sale. He still provides much of the food for his family but he is no longer a peasant.

178 436 437 Thus the place of money provides a basic distinction between the present 'commercialized' position and that which prevailed under traditional peasant farming. A century ago money and financial transactions in general featured only

6:Beeley K-5 (1957-1958) 1959 EZ6 Malta EZ6

178 for a man to provide his marrying daughter with as sub-
583 stantial a dowry as possible. This was partly in kind:
183 land, animals, etc., and partly in money. The size of a
[554] girl's dowry was one of the indications of social position and for many a poor man the provision of it would represent sacrifice and saving over many years, especially where there were several marriageable daughters in one family. In the past, many farmers' sons could expect to find brides among the families of the same village and farming background.
[182] Thus a dowry of land or other property was an admirable way of building a farm-holding and was one of the counters to fragmentation consequent upon the system of land inheritance (B/525). Such an arrangement caused the minimum disruption in work and residence. However, as contacts between parts of the Islands have increased and marriages between individuals from different villages and also from differing economic backgrounds have become more common, a dowry of land is often quite inappropriate. Money takes its place and the desire for financial accumulation on the part of the fathers of girls of marriageable age leads them to put more emphasis on money and its investment.

178 Another development which has put money into an altogether
454 new perspective for the Maltese farmer has been his growing
423 desire to own the house in which he lives. As seen
471 (Section 2), most of the land worked by the farmers in the Islands is not owned by the operator concerned and this applies to the farm buildings and the house occupied by the family. As the farmer becomes ownership-conscious the first step is understandably to acquire his own home, a feature observed by the 1911 Commissioners. Having bought his house, the farmer turns his attention to the purchase of other parts of the land which he cultivates, but, even before doing this, he wants capital to enable him to build up the live-stock side of his holding. The importance of meat and dairy stock-raising (v. Section 2) has increased rapidly in recent years - especially since the 1939-45 War, and the need for capital in such cases is clearly much greater than in a farm unit based solely on arable cultivation where lease- or rental-holding is a convenient and accepted method of tenure (B/525).

178 Similarly, the spread of mechanization in Maltese
654 farming after 1945 (v. Section 2) brought in a need for
[426] capital. The Government added to this money consciousness with financial encouragement to farmers (in an effort to keep them on the land) in the form of very low interest loans for capital improvements of the farms and their equipment. The Government policy in connexion with milk

178 (the guaranteed price system for milk sold to the M.M.U.)
654 has had a similar effect. It has encouraged the farmer to
[234] turn to milk production and to increase his herd to the maximum (Section 2).

178 Briefly therefore, the position is that the farmer in
511 Malta and Gozo is now faced with a variety of factors
434 tending to make him money conscious to a degree unknown to his grandfather - who spent the 6d per year already mentioned. These factors basically underly the complex of socio-economic changes which have brought and are bringing improved living standards, "emancipation" and a greater range of demands:

(a) In diet, clothing, recreation and 'luxury' fields the farmer is demanding more than before, and this means money.

(b) The traditional pre-occupation with saving has been diverted towards the saving and investment of money rather than the accumulation of kind. Dowry is one example.

(c) The raised circumstances of the farmer have made him anxious to own his farm, and especially his house and (with the recent emphasis here) his animals.

(d) Anxious to get the most out of his holding within the present commercial system he is keen to develop his farm by acquiring machinery (with possible help from a Government loan) or by making some capital [464] improvement. Suffering from shortage of labour, he wants to be able to pay hired farm labour the high wages demanded. His own children work away from the home farm.

[722] (e) The artificially distorted market conditions in siege and war-torn Malta between 1939 and 1945 put the farmer in a commanding financial position, which he continues to regard nostalgically as a Golden Age of Maltese farming. He has never fully been reconciled to his now changed position.

DEBT

178 Thus, where the peasant farmer of a century ago saw in
434 his farm the means of providing for the various needs of
[471] the family, the modern farmer in Malta regards his holding, his animals, and equipment, as the means whereby he can make the money which he needs to buy more new items, to expand
[184] his property and to build up his capital reserves. This is the picture as it would be ideally and as it is for a very small section of the farming community: one of the major problems of Maltese farming today is that it is by no means the position among the great bulk of the rural and farming
178 population of the Islands. If, having observed the present
426 position of money and the demands upon which it is based,
434 one turns to a more detailed examination of the financial status of the Maltese farmer the true nature of the problem emerges. Far from acquiring the money which he expects,

178 his income from milk sold and expenses on fodder during
234 nine months of 1957 (Case V, Summary) illustrates the
434 progress of this debt. He looks back nostalgically to
426 the days when his father sold milk from door to door in
[654] the Urban area and complains bitterly of his present poverty. Incongruously, however, he insists that he fully realizes that without the present Government guarantee (through the M.M.U.) he could not operate at all. He probably does realize this.

(b) Another case of operation within permanent debt is provided by two cows-milk producers who work together as a unit (Case IX) with three dozen head of cattle and a total area held of about 100 tmien used primarily for the production of fodder for the herd. They claim that the debt factor makes it impossible for them to organize their farm and herd as they would wish. For example, while they fully realize the profit to be gained by rearing calves and selling fully grown animals, they are in fact forced to sell even female calves (which they would otherwise keep) in order to pay instalments towards the cost of cows or to pay off part of the debt outstanding to the fodder merchants. This debt position makes them reluctant to take on any further loan commitments; nevertheless the Government loan offers at only 1% are definitely attractive, as a means whereby they would be able to increase the number in their herd and also mechanize their field-work without making their debt
178 position appreciably worse. Behind all this it is clear
234 that they are basing all their hopes on the guaranteed milk
434 price offered by the M.M.U. and they are therefore intent
654 on accumulating animals and thereby supplying the M.M.U with as much milk as possible.

They have no thought or care as to what might happen were the official guaranteed price to go, along with the subsidy which supports it. In fact they have singularly little appreciation of the total picture of which they form part and will be content to grumble quietly and ignorantly as long as the present artificial situation
[212] brings them a steady income. They are both illiterate (Case IX).

(c) An illiterate farmer and herdsman (Case VI)
178 keeps no accounts of the finances of his farm working.
434 The money of the household is "kept in one purse" from
454 which all expenses, farm maintainance and improvement,
234 household expenses and all 'extra' items such as the
654 provision of dowries and wedding costs, etc., are met.
[451] This farmer admits to having been able to save more than £1000 as a result of the 1939-45 War but observes that today they "have a hard job to earn the daily bread". He claims that the savings had all gone by 1958 - partly on improvements to the house but mostly on the purchase of cows as part of his grand design to join the hundreds of other farmers in Malta and Gozo striving to ride on the crest of the wave of the M.M.U. guaranteed price for all milk produced. It is held that this pattern is typical of Maltese farming, and particularly dairying, today. The main energies of the farmer are devoted to making as large a profit as he can while the artificially-supported market for milk is maintained.

178 (d) A literate part-time farmer (Case XIII) keeps
434 accounts of the working of his farm. His second employ-
241 ment brings him in over £5 per week for all but a few
[511] weeks of the year and at the expense of only a small amount of his time and effort. In a normal year he reckons to make an income of about £450 of which about a third goes in costs of seeds, transport and manure, etc. and a further £50 in hiring labour. On account of the steady income from his other job farming has something of the quality of a hobby, a pursuit to be followed

795 Another Malta-wide authority is the Church, but the summit of this is scarcely less remote to the farmer than is 'Il-Gvern' for in the normal practice of his religion he leans directly on the local church and priests.

829 To the farmer 'Gvern' is synonomous with control. Illiteracy has, in the past, made it very difficult for him to view authority with anything but suspicion. This has not been made easier by incompetent and condescending elements within officialdom whose actions, if any, have confirmed the doubts of the small farmer striving to provide his family with a living despite the odds against him - of which 'Gvern' was one.

178 Today the picture is changing. It is official policy 654 to "encourage investment and to improve farming methods so as to raise the efficiency of the industry to a level where it can provide a decent livelihood for those engaged in it"[38].

178 The farmers' reactions to efforts on his behalf are 156 particularly important at this crucial stage in the pro- 829 gress of agriculture in the Islands. Essentially his outlook retains much of the traditional reserve and caution of the illiterate peasant, an attitude apparent also in two further contexts, the organization within farming itself (Unions, Co-Operatives, etc.), and the farmers' attitudes towards society in general and rural society in particular.

829 The three aspects of the problem may be re-phrased as
156 (i) the farmer's attitudes to officialdom, espec- the Department of Agriculture, and 'Il-Gvern' generally,

(ii) his attitude towards other farmers and towards the industry as a whole,

(iii) his position as a member of a socially 'low' class within Malta.

[561] Within each of these the present gulf between the younger generation, with a degree of education and emancipation, and the older (including most of the Islands' full-time farmers) produces a further conflict of attitudes and aspirations.

654 THE FARMER AND GOVERNMENT

Official interest in agricultural development has increased very rapidly during the present decade and now includes a wide variety of measures aimed at improving farming by financial support and investment. These have been outlined in Section 2. There has also been an attempt to educate the farmer in better suited techniques and to make him aware of improvements which, it is believed, will increase the profit from his farm or herd. The problem here is seen to be twofold:

6:Beeley K-5 (1957-1958) 1959 EZ6 Malta EZ6

654 (a) to decide which crops, animals, feeding stuffs, machinery, methods of farm management, etc., are most likely to improve Maltese farming conditions, and

(b) to pass this information to a conservative and doubting farming public.

654 242 A central feature of official policy since 1956 has been the Agricultural Advisory Service (B/252), modelled on the parallel organization in the United Kingdom. In Malta this body has aimed to co-ordinate research and experiment with encouraging the farmer to adopt proven results. Within a short while of its inception the Service was concerned with detailed investigations into pig rearing, poultry feeding, dairying, potatoes, tomatoes, fertilizers and other agricultural topics in the Islands (B/252, pp.3-4). At the same time a great deal of importance was attached to demonstrations and lectures to farmers. In addition broadcasts were made over the Rediffusion system and these were supplemented by a certain amount of printed publicity.

654 242 544 232 The easiest part of the programme of lectures and demonstrations was to get farmers and others to attend the meetings. Those who stayed away did so either because they could not be available at the appointed time or, more usually, because they could not be persuaded that foreign experts could know anything applicable to farming in Malta which the local farmer did not know already. The attitudes of those who did attend was revealing. In many cases the novelty of the event was the attraction but there was also a large element of reasoned interest. Attendances varied from a few dozen farmers in some of the smaller villages to 200 in Xaghra and other large rural settlements, while, in January, 1958, no less than 700 people assembled in Rabat to be lectured by four of the specialists then working with the local Department of Agriculture, and to see a film on "Clean Milk". The reactions of this audience were typical of the response to the whole range of lectures and demonstrations and illustrate clearly the kind of problem which any would-be improver of agriculture can expect to have to face in Malta. There was, significantly, only one Maltese woman in the audience at Rabat of which some two or three hundred appeared to be non-farmers and concerned rather with free coffee in the interval than with the topics of the lectures. Of the rest, however, some farmers had made considerable journeys to attend while more than a few of these had never set foot in a meeting hall or attended anything in the nature of a lecture or lesson in their lives. For them it was a 'Sunday-best' outing. Even the bravest

654 of those present could not however be persuaded to ask any
242 questions of the 'experts' or to develop any discussion,
544 although everything not in Maltese was translated copiously.
232 They were over-awed by the proceedings but were not slow to seize on topics raised by the speakers for future discussion among groups of farmers. The average age of those present was lower than that of the full-time farming population on account of the presence of large numbers of disinterested village youths and young men. But the true farmers themselves paid attention to what they were told and were especially impressed by the film.

Some of the points raised were dismissed as "not suitable for Malta". Some suggested measures were "interesting but unremunerative", notably the efforts, demonstrated in the film, to achieve cleanliness in milking. The farmer could not readily comprehend how he was to profit financially if he were to add what to him were needless tasks to an already heavy time-table. Yet, on the other hand, he was sceptical when told that many of the jobs which he is accustomed to performing could be replaced by more efficient methods. Being unable to read of farming outside Malta the illiterate believes that no methods could be better than those tried, tested and taught by his father and grand-father before him. Hence a major part of the work of an advisory service is "to create conditions which will give the farmer confidence in the advice given. The adviser must be above creed or party and honest in all his dealings. In addition, however, some inducement must be offered to the farmer to accept advice and the most powerful inducement that has yet been found is money - cash - a better price"[39].

657 One example of this inducement in practice was
232 afforded by the study of pig feeding using balanced rations which was undertaken by the Agricultural Advisory Service early in its career. Haesler was able to show that "the high mortality rate in small pigs can be considerably reduced, and what is more important, losses in pig keeping have been turned into profits" (R/252, p.3). The farming public was assailed with Maltese-language leaflets[40] showing how the traditional pig feeding patterns were both wrongly balanced and generally excessive in quantity and encouraging pig breeders to invest in the prepared balanced rations ('Ghalf Bilanċjat') then on the market. This improved diet would, it was claimed, not only produce a better pig but would result in reduced costs of feeding. This prospect appealed to the farmer, who hastened to purchase the balanced ration particularly as such rations were subsidized by the Government[40] in order to encourage

654 232 their adoption. Sales soared after the ration appeared and the idea spread rapidly from farmer to farmer. Unforeseen difficulties soon emerged however and threatened to make the ration unpopular among pig breeders as quickly as it had become popular a short while before. Partly on account of ignorance and illiteracy and partly because of the lack of the correct kind of propaganda farmers began to find that the ration was not the magical remedy to their pig problems. A sample investigation, by the writer, in Gozo among farmers who had purchased the balanced ration showed that some of them had understood it to be a kind of medicine to be given in addition to the diet normally fed, others treated it as one item of the feed and mixed it with their normal ration to the pigs, while most common of all was the complaint that "I've been feeding the balanced ration for a week and there is no sign of the promised improvement so I'm using no more". Individuals of this latter inclination not only stopped purchasing the ration themselves but spread ugly rumours about it among their fellows. None of those with such complaints would consider approaching the Officers of the Advisory Service - as they had in fact been invited to do in the leaflet[40]. For them the new pig feed was a failure.

654 829 242 232 Illiteracy produces a feeling of inferiority in most cases which makes the farmer too timid to approach a department or an official on some problem. Moreover the written word is for them suspect. Therefore if they are to be persuaded to adopt new techniques in their farming the instruction will have to be personal and followed up with further help and advice when difficulties and lack of appreciation of what is intended emerge. For these farmers lectures are too remote. Demonstrations of new crops or cultivation methods, etc. are more likely to succeed but are insufficient in themselves. Unfortunately a large qualified staff of visiting advisers would be necessary to supervise farmers at such an individual level. In Malta this is not yet available. Even if it were the farmers' trust would have to be gained and maintained at every stage. In the past such trust has been conspicuous but its absence with the farmer believing that everyone with whom he comes in contact is anxious to take advantage of his illiteracy for their own gain. There has been no-one to give him professional, impartial advice on farming and the new Advisory Service with its free information and other help to the farmer is still something 654 232 242 of an unknown quantity. The Agrarian Society (R/286) has in the past been responsible for a certain amount of research on agricultural topics in Malta but does not appear

854 to have made its presence felt among the farmers them-
232 selves.
242 When a greater number of qualified personnel are available the Advisory Service and its various ramifications may go a very long way to improving Maltese agriculture and raising the profit-margin and therefore the living standards of the farming population. But in its early stages it has had to concentrate on the present farmers of Malta and Gozo who are, as has been emphasized, not only often illiterate but frequently near retiring age as well. The younger generation of farmers' sons, on whom the future of agriculture in the Islands will depend, have had to be overlooked. But if they cannot be persuaded to stay in farming the improvements accepted after great effort by the generation of their fathers will mean very little.

241 In Malta and Gozo there is nothing to compare with the
829 Young Farmers' Clubs of the United Kingdom; nothing in
[575] fact to serve as a nucleus around which an enlightened
younger farming generation might develop. Neither is
[874] there anything in the Islands of the nature of an agricultural college where young farmers might be trained. It is possible that the primary schools in rural areas might provide a means of contact between the agricultural authorities and the children of the farmers but the difficulties which would arise are clear. Nevertheless such an approach as this might do something to alter the attitude to farming which is one of the biggest problems facing the industry in the Islands today. If farming and other rural children could be shown that farming is no less respectable than the variety of alternative occupations it might persuade them to stay in the industry long enough to build upon the improvements now being introduced.

654 As was clear in the case of the balanced rations for
234 pigs mentioned above the farmer is not slow to take advantage of a financial subsidy. The major example of this is the recent growth of the dairying industry with the guaranteed price to producers for milk sold to the M.M.U. (Section 2). In short, official policy here has been to make milk production profitable for the producer but at the same time to maintain a low consumer price for the pasteurized product - at a level producing a loss the
[433] cost of which is borne by the Government. The totals of milk purchased from producers by the M.M.U. reflect the rapid increase in this aspect of farming in recent years. Milk surpluses (partly losses) also increased markedly as did the percentage of milk deriving from cows rather than goats[41].

TABLE 3

Year	Purchased by M.M.U.		Surplus		Percentage cows' milk
1943-44	510,000	gallons			27
1948-49	776,000	"			
1950-51	1,298,000	"			35 (1951)
1952-53	1,795,000	"	99,000	gallons	44 (1953)
1954-55	2,390,000	"	275,000	"	48 (1955)
1956-57	3,542,000	"	391,000	"	57 (1956)

A consideration of Cases I to IX and XII (Section 6) shows how this official support for dairying in the Islands has made herdsmen in the Islands desperate to benefit from the guaranteed milk market. Many have greatly increased their herds and withdrawn from other aspects of their farming in order to concentrate on milk production. Removal of Government support would have serious repercussions (Section 2) but, meanwhile, the herdsman is well satisfied with his steadily increasing income. The attitude of mind which permits a herdsman to develop a particular aspect of farming on this basis is significant. Clearly he has little awareness of the artificial basis of the position or, if he has, he is poor enough to take advantage of anything likely to bring a ready return whatever the long-term limitations may be.

Following the same pattern it would seem that if the farmer can be persuaded, for example, that he would increase the profit from his farm if he were to keep cost account records and modify his farm management accordingly he would be happy to do so. Similarly, as long as the balanced ration for pigs seemed to be doing his animals no harm he continued to feed it because it was subsidized and cheap. When, through mismanagement, the animals showed no signs of any improvement he returned speedily to the traditional feeding pattern. But this is a comparatively small question by comparison with the large-scale distortion of the dairying industry as a result of the guaranteed milk price - although the farmer does not think of the situation in these terms. There emerges, therefore, something of a moral obligation on the part of the Government to maintain the situation which a subsidy or virtual subsidy, as in the case of dairying, has produced.

Just as the farmer thinks only a short way ahead in time so far as the management of his farm is concerned so are his notions of space restricted. Earlier in this Section it was observed that he is aware of little beyond Malta. Thus it is difficult to make the farmer appreciate the intricacies of the export market for Maltese agricultural produce[42]. The fact that Maltese produce for export

439 suffers by being inadequately graded and packed does not concern him although the specialist working in Malta on marketing problems has stressed this as a primary weakness up to now (B/253). The farmer is further reluctant to
[178] change to the production of certain 'early' varieties of potato which would sell much more profitably on the overseas market than does the Arran Banner which has been the predominant variety in the Islands for several decades.

178 The argument returns, in fact, to the thesis put forward in a number of contexts in this report that the farmer
241 is still thinking very much as a peasant subsistence producer although to outward appearances he has now become a fully commercial, cash-cropping farmer. This outlook, the product of illiteracy and confined experience, will have to be appreciated by those concerned with any kind of improvement and development in the Maltese agriculture. It is the younger, literate generation of the farming community who would be capable of education in these terms - if they stay in agriculture to be educated.

654 In the long run it would appear that the most satis-
426 factory kind of financial help to farming is the loan at very low interest rate (Section 2). The basis of this was the Agriculture and Fishing Industries (Financial Assistance) Act, No.11 of 1956, which authorized the loans for approved capital improvement projects at only 1% interest per annum. A major result of the loan system was that it made the farmer independent of money-lenders and money-lending middlemen. Previously many farmers had suffered near financial strangulation in the grip of these indivuals, particularly where they were operating under perpetual debt (v. Cases V and IX). A second great advantage of the loan is that the farmer is able to improve his farm and farming and at the same time preserve that independence of operation so dear to him. Many of the subsidies on seeds, rations, etc. have forced him to use his money in a certain way. He much prefers if possible to have the money and spend it as he chooses on machinery, livestock and fodder, buildings, cisterns, irrigation equipment, land reclamation, and repayment of previous debts, etc.

654 One disturbing feature of the loans is, however, that
426 they are putting a lot of money into the hands of the
454 farmer without necessarily ensuring that it is spent to the best advantage of agriculture or to the farmer himself in a long term view. For example much of the money loaned has been put towards the purchase of livestock and accommodation for animals in order to increase milk production, while the present regime of guaranteed milk price remains. To this extent the loans have helped the

654 herdsman to produce a now over-grown dairy industry
426 (v. figures of milk purchases and surpluses earlier in this
454 Section).

Similar problems arise from the way in which the loans have helped farmers to acquire machinery for working their fields. As regards the small rotary cultivators this may be to the good but the position of the larger type of tractor is much more doubtful (v. Section 2), and little advisory control is at present being exercised.

UNIONS AND CO-OPERATIVES

229 The farmers' attitude to officialdom and 'Gvern' has
467 been characterized by suspicion and doubt. But certainly no less strained have been relations between one farmer and another. An 'every man for himself' attitude has emerged on the administrative side of farming in the Islands, though not at the level of small-scale economic
[474] co-operation (Section 2). The main outcome of this has been that Unions of farmers have had only a limited appeal and even marketing Co-operatives have only recently assumed
[747] any importance. The very recent tractor co-operatives (Section 2) are proving successful but would probably not have begun without free donations of equipment by C.A.R.E.[29].

A common attitude met among all types of farmers in the Islands is that "Unions can do nothing for the farmer". At present there are two but, even together, they account for a very small part of the farming population and certainly have little effect on policy or on the organization of the farming industry. One of the two Unions was founded thirty years ago but the entire administration appears to be in the hands of one man and the farmers themselves take no part in it. In 1956 a faction within the Union broke away and registered a second Union but this too has been supported by a very small number of individuals[43]. The fear at all times is that someone with education and ambitions will make use of such a Union for his own good and have no concern for the welfare of the farmers. Too ignorant and illiterate to speak for himself the farmer believes he is surrounded by treachery on all sides and consequently withdraws from all combined effort. He is still enough a peasant at heart to believe that his own interests can best be served by he himself maintaining strict independence in his farming. This emerges throughout the projects of official help to the farming community outlined above.

829 It has also precluded the development of a substantial
474 Co-operative movement in agricultural marketing and trading.

000 matter. [P 65]

494 While the farmer does not favour the co-operative
442 movement at present he is generally dissatisfied also with
829 the pitkal system and complains of the excessive profits
178 being made by the pitkal, the sensal (a broker and transporter of produce) and the retailer. Very few do however venture to evade these middlemen completely by selling their produce directly to the consumer (B/387, p.17). This is probably the result in part of shortage of labour but in part also a reflection of the 'respect' in which the pitkal is held. The farmer is characteristically suspicious of any change in such a long-established part of his farming, even though he is loud with complaints of it.

208 The Government plan to centralize marketing on the
654 one hand and to encourage the co-operative movement in the
474 selling of produce on the other will not succeed without
44 a great deal of patient education of the farmer supplemented by material incentives such as subsidies and other assistance already given in other aspects of agricultural development. The most successful co-operatives in Maltese farming to date are probably the two tractor co-operatives founded with the initiative and grant of free equipment by C.A.R.E. (Section 2). Here the farmer has seen a clear financial saving in plowing costs with no capital outlay on his part. He must similarly be persuaded that centralization and Co-operatives in marketing would be to his advantage. Not only the farmers themselves but the consumers also would stand to benefit from a streamlining of marketing with grading and better packing and presentation of produce, while the improvements in Malta's position as an exporter of agricultural produce would fully justify the effort involved (B/253)[42].

YOUTH AND FARMING

464 In their pioneer investigation into the attitudes of
184 the Maltese farmer Fr. Cirillo and his Royal University
178 team stressed the crucial position of the younger generation in agriculture in the Islands (B/387). The present writer concurs with their views and considers the present retreat from farm and village as the most urgent problem in the industry. Something of the technical and economic background to this trend has been seen in Sections 2 and 3, but the social factors involved are no less important.

The fundamental contrast in outlook between the younger and older generations of the farming community today is that in the case of the older generation "with meagre opportunities in other occupations, and often

464 lacking any education at all they took up farming as their
184 natural calling" (B/387, p.9), but their sons are faced
178 with a choice both between occupations and ways of life. Their education is enabling them to compete with other sections of society for industrial and other non-agricultural employment while their emancipation, in terms of access to the world outside the village, is leading them to think of escape from the lowly social status of their fathers. They have been brought up to appreciate the insecurity of farming with its inadequate and fluctuating income and have seen the technical limitations and the hard and monotonous schedule of work with which their fathers have had to contend in order to provide even the most frugal living standards for their families. In very many cases the younger generation have been actively discouraged by their elders from contemplating farming as a livelihood. Within society as a whole they see farming as something of a low 'caste' and one example of this is the opposition faced by many a young farmer if he wishes to marry into a non-farming family.

The importance of this revolt on the part of the younger generation is clear when one considers the topic of this Section. The current policy is to change the pattern of farming in the Islands and to raise the standards of living of the farmers by the variety of methods mentioned and these are, quite naturally, being aimed primarily at the present farmers, that is to say the older generation. But the future of farming depends on the future farmers who are, it would appear, leaving or have already left the industry. Many of them do not plan to stay in farming longer than the time necessary to find another occupation and they are consequently not concerned with loans, subsidies, lectures, and the work of the advisory service. The farming which they are anxious to leave will, it is hoped, change rapidly in response to the measure outlined. But, even if only a few years are needed to show substantial results and a better kind of farming is evolved, the younger generations may not be there to take over. Many of them will have emigrated from the Islands altogether and others will have left the villages for all manner of employment in the towns.

654 The official aid to farming policy may fail, one
829 fears, on two accounts:

(i) The measures designed to assist the farmer and farming have not yet been as successful as was hoped because of the difficulties of having rapid and far-reaching changes accepted by a suspicious, conservative and largely illiterate body of farmers,

654 809 464 178 (ii) The younger generation are not interested in improving farming; they scarcely stop to think that any changes in the industry might be possible in their present anxiety to find a new job in a different walk of life. Thus they will probably not be available to take over Maltese agriculture, improved or otherwise, from their fathers.

SECTION 5 : Conclusions.

369 In conclusion one may attempt to draw together the several general points raised in the previous four Sections. The most important of these may be listed as follows:

(1) The twentieth century is witnessing an accelerating process of the 'urbanization' of rural Malta and Gozo (Section 1). This comprises

(a) material change (the development of electricity, roads, sewage, transport, and a variety of other amenities),

(b) cultural change following general, elementary education - that is literacy, 'emancipation' and the emergence of a critical public awareness,

[565] [793] (c) social and economic changes which have laid the foundations of a rural middle class, unknown in the traditional village scene. Along with this have come modifications in the pivotal rôle of the Parish Priest and other priests. Some of their traditional functions, notably teaching and caring for the sick, have been taken over by specialists in such fields.

369 829 The factors outlined under (a), (b), and (c) are tending to extend the horizon of the individual villager far beyond the limits of his own village. Whereas he used to work and think within his family and village he is now aware of Malta and beyond.

241 464 178 (2) The particular physical limitations on farming in the Islands have, in the past, made the industry dependent to a very considerable extent on the meticulous hand-labour of the industrious Maltese farmer. This has been necessary not only in cultivation itself but also in the maintenance, and even construction, of the fields and terraces themselves (Section 2). The present younger generation of the farming community is showing itself unwilling to accept the life and work which conditions such as these involved. They have benefited from general elementary education, literacy, and contact with the world outside the villages to the extent of demanding work which seems to them economically and socially rewarding. The past twenty-five years have seen a rapid decline in the number of full-time farmers and farm-workers. Today the farmer, in most cases no longer assisted by his sons, finds hired labour both scarce and costly (Section 2).

829 a policy of long term assurances for agriculture" (B/387,
159 p.39). He claims that the Government "ought" to guarantee his prices, his markets, and "ought" to find the foreign export markets, and provide machinery, subsidies, etc. He also insists, incongruously, that farmers' needs could well be served by a strong and well-organized Union of Farmers and yet, in the next breath, he will reject outright any suggestions that he, individually, might take a prominent part in such a movement. The nature of this attitude emerges clearly from the collection of complaints and comments, made by farmers to Fr. Cirillo and his Royal University team (B/387). On the one hand, the farmer demands Government support for farming but, on the other hand, he speaks even of his fellow farmers as "they". Conservative, cautious and usually illiterate, he is quick to speak but slow to act (v.Section 4).

829 The new awareness of horizons outside the village is consequently limited in extent and confined in nature. The farmer's son, however, with his education and emancipation and his ideas of social and economic emulation, has a clearer vision of the illogicality of his father's situation but is not yet sufficiently mentally liberated from the past to see for himself any right course of action.

554 (7) As a class, the farmer is low on the social scale.
369 This arises partly from his illiteracy and the features outlined in (6) and is partly also the outcome of a tradition of wealth and education being confined to the cities and
[177] towns. Wealth and culture came easily to the urban section of Maltese society and both implied foreign contacts on a large scale. Meanwhile the Maltese farmer toiling in his fields remained cut off socially as well as economically.

Today this felt inferiority puts him

178
554 (a) in a weak position for bargaining with Government and 'officials' and business men fully prepared to take advantage of their rather better education,

(b) - if young and literate, in the position of being anxious to escape from his lowly class by leaving the village and farming as opportunity presents itself (v.Section 4).

● 654 (8) Official policy has been to assist farming in the
178 Islands by means of a variety of subsidies and guarantees designed to protect the farmer from unfavourable competition and fluctuations in market demand (Sections 2 and 4). The industry has, in the past, received such attention only in time of siege of widespread unemployment. The basic intention today is therefore

[135] (a) to enable Malta's only basic industry - agriculture - to develop under protection for it is held that "In an Island where mineral resources are non-existent agriculture must play a predominant part in the national economy" (B/239, p.2).

654 (b) to encourage the members of the farming community to remain in their villages and in the industry.

654 234 (9) Following the official policy, outlined under (8) - particularly that relating to dairying in the Islands, and the limited and short-sighted outlook of the average Maltese farmer (v.6), an irrational emphasis on milk production has emerged in recent years (v. Section 4). The dairy industry has grown to unprecedented size in the Islands and many herdsmen have seized eagerly upon the guaranteed price for milk sold to the M.M.U. as a source of a steady income. The fact that the dairy industry as a whole is over-producing and the continuation of the present conditions depend on a virtual Government subsidy does not deter them from concentrating all efforts into milk production to the neglect of other aspects of farming.

654 178 (10) The official policy, outlined in (8) and (9), seems likely to fail or to come near to failure on two main accounts (Section 4):

(a) the difficulties facing current attempts to persuade the farmer to accept new schemes, crops, equipment, methods, etc., and arising from

(i) the outlook and attitudes of the farmer as discussed in (6),

[208] (ii) the use of unsuitable means of propaganda by the Advisory Service and others at present attempting to persuade the farmer to accept new ideas and methods which would bring him cheaper working, a better profit and, thereby, contentment.

(b) the fact that the policy, outlined in (8), is directed, naturally enough, at the present farmers. This generation, however, illiterate and conservative, and with an average age in the late fifties, is, in the long-term view, the wrong one.

The present younger generation in the farming community, whose literacy and awareness of the world beyond the village make them educable and more responsive to new ideas, are the individuals towards whom official effort should be directed if Maltese agriculture is not to be lost by default. Nothing, however, included in official policy (up to December, 1959, is aimed at them (there is nothing resembling a young farmers' club in the Islands and no institute or college where agriculture can be studied).

241 178 The younger generation is in fact, on account of the whole complex of technical, economic and social reason (the strenuous work, the insecurity and the low social status involved) discussed in the four previous Sections, anxious to escape from farming as fast as opportunity to do so emerges.

The problem is clear, and its solution one of action.

654
241 An F.A.O. report on investigations in Malta and Gozo observes that "Progress in agriculture is fundamentally a human problem; it depends on knowledge and the intelligent application of knowledge" (B/243, p.9). Within the Islands themselves there is a certain awareness of the situation and
[181] particularly of the need for an official policy designed to develop the agricultural industry to the best advantage of the total economy of the Islands and to assist the farmers who "are perhaps the most hard-working, honest and God-fearing section of the community and the country will be the loser if it were to let them down" (B/387, p.7).

It must be noted that the position in Gozo is even more intractable than in Malta.

From work done in the field two major lines of approach to the problem of Maltese farming emerge:

(a) Development policy must be related to the present and future position of her only basic industry - agriculture - within Malta's total economy. In this context one feels that at present there is some over-emphasis on the parts rather than the whole, that is the individual farmer qua economic unit and on the means whereby he may derive increased profit from his present - generally uneconomic - farm-unit. It is too easy to discuss minutiae of policy which are "good for agriculture", rather than to consider either men in villages or the fundamental national needs.

(b) The long-term improvement of Maltese agriculture as regards both the national economy and the fortunes of the individual farmers depends on the personnel of farming as much as on policy imposed from above. Policies must be tailored to fit the varying capabilities for absorption among the farmers, from the potato-grower who cannot see why a certain variety of potatoes is not selling on the export market to the dairyman unable to comprehend the artificially distorted basis of the industry which provides his livelihood. Moreover, up to now few development plans have been aimed specifically at the future farmers of Malta, the young, literate generation of the farming community. Before they have all left farming and village society this generation must be made aware of the possibilities and potential of agriculture in Malta and Gozo.

468
829
234 FOOTNOTE: While this report was 'in print' it was announced that the milk producers had decided to withhold deliveries to the M.M.U. (B/59, 17th November, 1959, p.4). They argue that the guaranteed price given them should be increased to take into account current production costs - especially of fodder. The fact that they appear to have overlooked the £370,000 paid by the taxpayer in subsidizing the milk industry (1958) illuminates both the narrow outlook of the farmer and his failure to appreciate the uneconomic basis of his dairying industry today (v.9).

6:Beeley K-S (1957-1958) 1959 EZ6 Malta EZ6

128 [226] PART 3. A note on the Fishermen of Malta and Gozo is included because the economic position of this comparatively small group is in many ways similar to that of the farming community itself.

*159 234 654 PART 1. Maltese Farming - Case Studies I-XIII

CASE I: Pawlu. (A Gozitan large-scale goats' milk producer with a considerable land-holding.)

Pawlu gives the impression of being one of the more prosperous of herdsmen in his native Gozo. He is currently concentrating his effort on his 46 goats and 2 cows and is typical of the many herdsmen in the Islands who are today profiting from the official M.M.U. policy of a guaranteed [435] sale for milk produced. He receives between 5/- and 6/- per gallon, according to season, provided only that the milk passes certain fat-content and other tests.

This is the background to Pawlu's present specialization on milk at the expense of vegetable and fodder production for sale, a specialisation which enables him to run his farm as an apparently profitable concern. The vulnerability of his position is however evident. A drastic change in the official policy of 'subsidy by guarantee' would snatch away the basis of his income as it would that of the many herdsmen like him.

*159 55 423 [463] Pawlu's father was primarily a tailor, working a few fields in a part-time capacity. His grandfather had been a quarryman. In 1935, when he was thirty-two, Pawlu married the daughter of a farmer in his village. From that date onward he began to build up his own farm-holding - he had previously worked as a hired farm labourer. At his marriage he was given the tenancy of some land both by his own family and by that of his wife, land to which he added in later years plots taken over from other tenants together with some further land from his family. Some of the plots which Pawlu acquired he later abandoned, sold, sub-let or exchanged on account of small size, inaccessibility, distance, etc., and he also declined to take over the working of 16 tmien (which would have come from his wife's family on marriage) on account of the distance of the fields from the home. A statement of the holding illustrates some characteristic features of the Maltese farm - its parcellation, the small amount owned rather than leased or held on rental, the variety of owners concerned in the case of most of the plots, the types of sources from which the fields were acquired, reasons for the relinquishing of certain pieces and the scattered nature of the holding of twenty-six separate plots spread over a quarter of the Island of Gozo (B/525).

*159 185 241 178 the source of the enthusiasm among his children and when a few more years have made them money-conscious it is difficult to visualise their reconciling the limitations and lack of profit in farming with their aspirations towards the bright lights of Valletta and other diversions. For the present nevertheless Ġużepp wants to expand his land holding and herd, although he has no sort of a bank balance and thinks in terms of the present low-interest loans being made available by the Government for farm development and of "working harder, rising earlier and economising on fruit and desserts for the children".

*159 362 [427] His house is old and remote from the village. He pays the landlord, "who does not do the repairs he ought", £8.10s per annum and thinks £5 would be much fairer. Given a perpetual lease on a plot he would build himself a new house and include near it accommodation for his animals. For his large family of wife and eight children the house, though very well kept, is hopelessly inadequate. Certainly [157] the placid and generous natures of both Ġużepp and his wife enable the family to carry on under limitations of both home and farm which would have persuaded many another farmer to emigrate long ago.

*159 54 461 Moreover there is nothing in the hamlet which might be called social relaxation. The nearest Band Clubs, cinemas and cafés are in the village more than a mile away - a long distance by Maltese standards. However, as Ġużepp's wife observes "these things are not missed by the people" who have had little experience of them. She notes that in Malta, unlike England, the countryman can easily get to the bright lights, if he wishes, by bus. "But work, family and Church take up a lot of time".

*159 467 654 [426] Labour problems do not trouble Ġużepp. He can himself operate his small holding and care for his two dozen animals with the help of his wife, who joins him in the fields when work is pressing, and his young sons, whose contribution, he admits, is very considerable out of school hours and in the vacations. He is keen to mechanize (i.e. to acquire a hand cultivator on a Government low-interest loan) because he sees this as the way to increase the area worked with his present labour force. A larger area would mean more fodder produced which would bring more profit on the milk sold, while the number of animals could itself be increased along with the provision of extra accommodation (also on Government loan). The basic assumption here is that the Government's guaranteed price to the herdsmen for *159 443 milk produced will continue. If it does not he would, it appears, be forced to rely more on field produce for sale through the pitkal marketing system. He knows that profits here would be less and disturbingly prone to competitive

CASE VII : Wensu (A goats' and cows' milk producer with a small land holding.)

Like Case VI, Wensu has been a goat herder and is now anxious to concentrate on dairy cows. At present he holds 4 Friesians, belonging to himself and his sons, but he wants to import Ayrshires. This cow, says Wensu, is better suited to Maltese conditions, needing less feed than the Friesian and standing up better to long periods of confinement in cramped stalls. Wensu became interested in cows when the Government forbade the selling of raw goats' milk in Valletta. For a time thereafter he sold bottled milk in the capital and then returned to selling raw goats' milk in still unclosed areas such as nearby Cospicua until that too came to an end with the evacuation in 1940. After the War he went back to cows' milk production and sold his output to the M.M.U. He acquired the Friesians through an exchange for inferior quality and diseased goats organized by the Government (one cow for 13 goats). At present, he says, cows' milk production is the more profitable ("Six cows will support a small family") but that this would not be so were it possible to give goats good grazing land at low cost. He reckons that good grazing saves 15/- per day on the fodder bill.

Wensu's Case illustrates an important feature of the study of a predominantly illiterate section of society. This is the prominence of personality in the thoughts and actions of the individual. Unable to read and suspicious of what he may hear over Rediffusion, Wensu relies on personal contact to a very considerable degree. This is clear from a brief survey of his life. He speaks nowadays of a certain Dr. MacParlane whose veterinary skill and advice impressed him and who originally recommended him to keep Ayrshires. To listen to Wensu talking of this "Scots Doctor" one gathers that Wensu last spoke with him quite recently. In fact, however, Dr. A.N. MacParlane was Superintendent Veterinary Surgeon in Malta some half a century ago! A Mr. Hurst gave him advice on bulls some 25 years ago while, much more recently, Mr. Ebejer Blythe of the Department of Agriculture gave him much valued information on lucerne as a fodder and, latest of all, Dr. Godfrey Alton, the veterinary expert, has become something of a help for the injections he has arranged. Evidently, therefore, any improvements in Maltese farming have a greater chance of success if this element of personal contact - particularly in the cases of illiterate farmers - can be established. One man who will argue with one farmer for a morning on a single topic stands a greater chance of general success than has the big public lecture or even the practical demonstration

*159 24 311 The larger pieces of ground are put to potatoes, tomatoes, artichokes (qaqoċċ), marrows (qargħa bajħli), and a variety of vegetables. Fig, pomegranate and other trees fill the corners and edges of fields and a tomato seed-bed and a hen-house also manage to find space in odd corners. [406] [343] [134] Two machine-driven pumps and a few tiny storage and shelter rooms complete the scene. The block of fields is in a small sheltered valley on the east coast of the Island and contains clay soils tending to be heavy, especially in wet weather.

*159 241 433 434 829 [464] Pietru's irrigable fields are clearly the focus of his interest and attention. He observes that they bring in a greater profit per man/day of effort than do the dry fields which he prefers to leave to the wife and children to cultivate on a more casual basis. Nevertheless Pietru is not able to make a profitable concern of his farm despite his own heavy working schedule and the full-time assistance of at least two teenage children. In fact he is poor enough to qualify for C.A.R.E.[27] food distributions. He is however content with farming as an occupation and critical only of the lack of adequate remuneration. His attitude is to 'make the most' of his farm within current limitations. He was a [474] founder member of a C.A.R.E. sponsored tractor co-operative (Section 2) although he admits that when the project was first suggested he was opposed to it on the grounds of rather having the money than letting the Government get it. This belief that the Government is behind everything is characteristic (Section 4). C.A.R.E. is of course an independent organization distributing American surplus food and equipment.

*159 178 241 Thus Pietru's son who works full-time with his father is faced with his father's industry and enthusiasm for farming on the one hand but he can see for himself the apparent impossibility of achieving anything above low living standards. Whether he will join the trek away from farming is not yet clear. His educational standard is lower than is the case among many of his generation and it may be that he will have difficulty in finding employment outside farming.

If Pietru can improve the efficiency and profitabily of his farm (by using better suited crops, new methods and new equipment with Government financial and advisory assistance) his son might be pursuaded to stay in it. The problem of Maltese farming today is that there are very few young men in the farming industry who show as much inclination to [426] [654] stay on the land. The Government has been keen to assist the full-time farmer with loans and other help in an effort to encourage him to stay on the land and to develop agriculture to the full but it has done comparatively little for the young men in farming who are, in the long term view at least, the more important. If they cannot be induced to stay in farming the industry would appear to be doomed.

000 can command.

226 There has, however, been material help to fishing in the
463 form of financial assistance[31] and the introduction of a
654 Fishing Equipment Supply Service (R/177 - 1957, Section F,
178 p.1), but the essence of the problem is, as in agriculture, that there is a retreat from fishing by the younger generation.

226 Marsaxlokk is the biggest fishing centre in the Islands
103 while, in Malta itself, Żurrieq - though not a port - comes
62 second by number of resident fishermen. In Gozo most fisher-
361 men live in Victoria and Xewkija, both inland settlements away from the fishing harbours of Marsalforn, Mġarr and Xlendi. Socially this residential distribution is important since only in Marsaxlokk is there a sufficient resident fishing population for one to talk of a 'fishing community'.

361 Marsaxlokk achieved parochial status in 1897 but the
226 village is still without many 'modern' attributes such as cinema, resident doctor, barber and certain shopping facilities for which the fisherman goes to Żejtun. His interest is
[484] primarily the sea and many fishermen visit the 'town' only
[443] for the fish market. In Marsaxlokk itself the fishermen
[512] gather for Church and gossip on Sunday mornings; the rest of their weekly schedule is governed by the weather and the season.

226 As a class the fishermen and their families are economi-
463 cally lower than the farmers. In February, 1958, about
554 10.4% of the estimated 840 fishermen were poor enough to
511 qualify for C.A.R.E. relief (v. Section 3). At the same
162 time only 9% of farmers were entitled to supplies on the same basis, and the average for the total population was lower still at 8.2%.

226 The fisherman is regarded, even by the farmer, as low on
463 the social scale. This, together with the generally
554 depressed standard of living of the fishing community despite
178 the present official financial assistance, is producing exactly the same position as in agriculture. The younger generation is not prepared to accept the industry as it is nor the way of life based on it.

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6
Gozo

Corniche from heights as inaccessible as nature and man's ingenuity could make them. When the marauders from North Africa ceased to be a menace, the citadel was partly evacuated for the lower town, but happily was never abandoned completely. Even now it contains the cathedral of the diocese and the Law Court and Public Registry, formerly the residence of the Governors of Gozo; and, although many of its ancient houses are in ruins, a few are still inhabited.

One interesting little lane with façades of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was restored by the Government before the outbreak of the Second World War, as has been the handsome Renaissance building facing the entrance to the citadel latterly known as the Bondi Palace, as related at the end of Chapter XIII. One of the houses in the lane at one time belonged, as an inscription testifies, to the soldier Bernard, "*miles Bernardus*," who was killed at the capture of the citadel by the Turks under Sinan Pasha in 1551. When he saw that the fortress could hold out no longer this dauntless man took the lives of his wife and two daughters with his own hand to save them from being sold into captivity, and then fell, fighting to the end. The walls and fortifications of the citadel are happily well preserved.

Gozo was Ogygia or Gaulos to the Greeks, *gaulos* (γαῦλος) being the word the Greeks had for the round merchant-boats of their rivals, the Phœnicians. From Gaulos it became Gaulum to the Romans, then appears on Idrisi's map of 1154 as Ghudash, and in modern Maltese is known as Ghawdex (pronounced Audesh), its Bishop signing as *Episcopus Gaudisiensis*. The shortest ferry-crossing between the two islands is only four miles, yet many Gozitans have never been to Malta while the overwhelming majority of Maltese have never been to Gozo.

The Gozitans are a frugal, thrifty, reserved, at times somewhat (yet not unpleasantly) dour people, who are regarded in Malta in much the same way as the Scots are

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

to the political parties and Her Majesty's Government. Farther efforts must, of course, be made, and it is Her Majesty's Government's intention to hold farther discussions in due course with a view to reintroducing elected representative government. In the meantime it is desirable that the present arrangements, under which the Governor is using his emergency powers under the present Constitution to govern the islands, should be terminated as soon as possible. Her Majesty's Government have accordingly no alternative but to revoke the present Constitution and to make special arrangements of an interim character for the government of Malta. This will necessitate legislation and a Bill will be introduced into Parliament after the House re-assembles. The form of government contemplated for this interim period is one in which the Governor will be assisted by a Council on which there will be Maltese representation.

7. During this interim period the Governor with the full support of Her Majesty's Government will press on with economic development. As was recognized in the 1955 Declaration to which the Maltese political leaders subscribe, Malta depends very heavily on Services expenditure and every effort must be made to develop other sources of income. Much has already been done since 1955 in laying the foundation for future industrial development, to which end Malta has received assistance amounting to some £18,000,000 from Her Majesty's Government.

8. Her Majesty's Government's main aim in promoting economic development in Malta is to attract new industries. The 1955 Declaration recognized that this required a joint effort towards which the Maltese Government and people should make the best possible contribution from their own resources. A very important step in Malta's economic development has already been taken by the decision to convert the Naval Dockyard to a commercial ship repair yard and to develop associated industries. The construction of a deepwater harbour, the building of an industrial estate, the re-equipment of the Island's electricity supply and other public utilities, and the development of tourism are already going ahead. Plans for other development are now under examination. It is the

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

654 433 648 Governor's intention to ask the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for advice from time to time on current problems of the Maltese economy and on the plans for Malta's economic development.

9. Private industrial development is to be assisted by the Aids to Industry legislation which the Governor intends to enact this month. This will offer substantial fiscal incentives to new industries to establish themselves in the Islands. New industries establishing themselves in Malta will also be eligible to apply for grants and loans. In administering these various incentives to industrial development the Governor will be assisted by an influential advisory body on which there will be Maltese representatives. This body will be under the chairmanship of Lord Hives, who is already familiar with Malta's problems.

Her Majesty's Government have now decided to contribute a sum of up to £29,000,000 over the next five years towards the cost of Malta's capital programme, the conversion of the dockyard to civil use and the encouragement of new industries.

642 654 648 The 1959 Constitution came into operation, as it happened, on the 15th April, which is celebrated in Malta as George Cross Day. It provides for the administration of the islands by the Governor with the aid of a part-official, part-nominated Executive Council with Maltese representation, an arrangement similar to that in force between 1936 and 1939. There was also enacted the Aids to Industry legislation foreshadowed in Mr Lennox-Boyd's Statement; Messrs Bailey successfully took over the Dockyard, which had been converted into a commercial undertaking with the financial help of the British Government; work was inaugurated on the construction of a new deep-water wharf in the Grand Harbour.

744 73 Sir Robert Laycock's term of office, while politically frustrating, ended with a year of economic advance and new hopes. It also saw an immense advance in social services such as District Nursing and the care of handicapped children, orphans and victims of infantile paralysis under the vigorous